

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA

ARLENE VIRGINIA HINTON,

Petitioner,

v.

Civil Action No. 3:07CV124  
Criminal Action No. 3:04CR10-02  
(JUDGE BAILEY)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Defendant.

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**  
**THAT § 2255 MOTION BE DENIED**  
**AS UNTIMELY**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

On September 17, 2007, *pro se* petitioner filed a Motion to Vacate, Set Aside or Correct Sentence Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2255.

**II. FACTS**

A. Conviction and Sentence

On March 30, 2005, Petitioner signed a plea agreement by which she agreed to plead guilty to Count 4 of the superceding indictment charging her with distribution of .54 grams of cocaine base. On July 28, 2005, the Court sentenced the petitioner to a term of 121 months imprisonment.

B. Appeal

Petitioner did not pursue a direct appeal.

C. Recommendation

Based upon a review of the record, the undersigned recommends that the petitioner's § 2255 motion be denied and dismissed from the docket as untimely.

### **III. ANALYSIS**

In 1996, the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 [“AEDPA”] was enacted, establishing a one-year limitation period within which to file any federal habeas corpus motion. 28 U.S.C. § 2255.<sup>1</sup>

The limitation period shall run from the last of:

1. The date on which the judgment of conviction becomes final;
2. The date on which the impediment to making a motion created by governmental action in violation of the Constitution or laws of the United States is removed, if the movant was prevented from making a motion by such governmental action;
3. The date on which the right was initially recognized by the Supreme Court, if that right has been newly recognized by the Supreme Court and made retroactively applicable to cases on collateral review<sup>2</sup>; or
4. The date on which the facts supporting the claim or claims presented could have been discovered through the exercise of due diligence.

28 U.S.C. § 2255.

In her § 2255 motion, the petitioner maintains that her motion is timely under AEDPA because she has “been actively seeking to remedy the situation.” In this regard, the petitioner is clearly wrong.

In most cases, a judgment of conviction becomes final when the time for filing a direct appeal expires. Aikens v. United States, 204 F.3d 1086, 1089 n. 1 (11th Cir. 2000). There are two

---

<sup>1</sup> The AEDPA applies to those cases filed after April 24, 1996, the effective date of the AEDPA. Lindh v. Murphy, 521 U.S. 320 (1997); Breard v. Pruett, 134 F.3d 615 (4th Cir.), cert. denied, 523 U.S. 371 (1998).

<sup>2</sup> The one-year statute of limitation period under this subsection runs from the date on which the Supreme Court initially recognized the right asserted, not from the date on which the right asserted was made retroactive. Dodd v. United States, 545 U.S. 353, (2005).

recognized exceptions to this general rule, which apply when a federal prisoner seeks direct appellate review of her conviction or sentence. First, if, following the disposition of her direct appeal, a federal prisoner files a petition for writ of certiorari with the U.S. Supreme Court, the conviction becomes final when the Supreme Court either denies certiorari or issues a decision on the merits. See Washington v. United States, 243 F.3d 1299, 1300 (11th Cir. 2001). Second, if the federal prisoner does not file a timely certiorari petition after disposition of her direct appeal, the conviction becomes final on the date on which the prisoner's time for filing such a petition expires, which is ninety days after entry of the judgment on direct appeal. See Clay v. United States, 537 U.S. 522, 532 (2003). Here neither exception applies because the petitioner did not file a direct appeal of her conviction.

For federal prisoners, the time for filing a direct appeal expires ten days after the written judgment of conviction is entered on the criminal docket. *See* Fed. R.Ap. P. 4(b)(1)(A)(I), (6). Therefore, the petitioner's conviction became final on August 25, 2005, the date her time for filing a (direct appeal, writ of certiorari or writ of certiorari was denied) expired. Therefore, she had until August 25, 2006 to file her habeas corpus under AEDPA. Because the petitioner did not file her § 2255 motion until September 17, 2007, it is clearly time barred.

#### **IV. RECOMMENDATION**

Based upon a review of the record, the undersigned recommends that the petitioner's § 2255 motion be denied and dismissed from the docket because the petitioner is time-barred from raising her claim since her petition was filed over one year after her conviction became final.

Within ten (10) days after being served with a copy of this report and recommendation, any party may file with the Clerk of Court written objections identifying those portions of the

recommendation to which objection is made and the basis for such objections. A copy of any objections shall also be submitted to the United States District Judge. Failure to timely file objections to this recommendation will result in waiver of the right to appeal from a judgment of this Court based upon such recommendation. 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1); Thomas v. Arn, 474 U.S. 140 (1985); Wright v. Collins, 766 F.2d 841 (4th Cir. 1985); United States v. Schronce, 727 F.2d 91 (4th Cir. 1984), cert. denied, 467 U.S. 1208 (1984).

The Clerk of the Court is directed to send a copy of this report and recommendation to the pro se petitioner by certified mail, return receipt requested, at her last known address as shown on the docket sheet. The Clerk of the Court is further directed to provide a copy of this report and recommendation to all counsel of record, as applicable, as provided in the Administrative Procedures for Electronic Case Filing in the United States District Court for the Northern District of West Virginia.

DATED: September 19, 2007

/s/ James E. Seibert  
JAMES E. SEIBERT  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE